

In the Claims:

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) Method for closing off at least one tunnel ~~(2)~~ extending across the width of a folding curtain ~~(1)~~, after a strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ has been inserted into this tunnel ~~(2)~~, characterized in that a strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ is provided in the tunnel ~~(2)~~, comprising at least at one extremity a number of pointed projections ~~(4)~~, and in that the tunnel ~~(2)~~ is closed off by pricking the said projections ~~(4)~~ through the wall of the tunnel.

2. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 1, characterized in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are movable against the force of a spring.

3. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are part of a terminal element ~~(5)~~, provided on the strengthening rod ~~(3)~~.

4. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 3, characterized in that the said terminal element ~~(5)~~ is carried out in the form of a sleeve ~~(6)~~ provided on the extremity of the strengthening rod ~~(3)~~.

5. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 3 ~~or 4~~, characterized in that the terminal element ~~(5)~~ is provided with a coiled spring ~~(7)~~ in order to exert a spring force on the said projections.

6. (Currently amended) Folding curtain ~~(1)~~ comprising at least one tunnel ~~(2)~~ extending across the width of the curtain,

which is provided with a strengthening rod ~~(3)~~, characterized in that the said strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ comprises a number of pointed projections ~~(4)~~ at least at one extremity and in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are pricking through the wall of the tunnel in order to close off the tunnel ~~(2)~~.

7. (Currently amended) Folding curtain ~~(1)~~ according to claim 6, characterized in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are movable against a spring force.

8. (Currently amended) Folding curtain ~~(1)~~ according to claim 6 ~~or 7~~, characterized in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are part of a terminal element ~~(5)~~ provided on the strengthening rod ~~(3)~~.

9. (Currently amended) Folding curtain ~~(1)~~ according to claim 8, characterized in that the said terminal element ~~(5)~~ comprises a sleeve-shaped jacket ~~(6)~~ containing a coiled spring ~~(7)~~ and an element ~~(8)~~ provided with the said pointed projections ~~(4)~~ and in that the element ~~(8)~~ is movable against the spring force of the coiled spring ~~(7)~~.

10. (Currently amended) Folding curtain ~~(1)~~ according to claim 9, characterized in that the element ~~(8)~~ is provided with pointed projections ~~(4)~~ made of synthetic material.

11. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ for a folding curtain, characterized in that at least one extremity of the said strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ comprises a number of pointed projections ~~(4)~~ and in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are provided

to prick through the wall of the tunnel, in order to close off the tunnel ~~(2)~~.

12. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ according to claim 11, characterized in that the said projections ~~(4)~~ are part of a terminal element ~~(5)~~ provided on the strengthening rod ~~(3)~~.

13. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ according to claim 11 ~~or 12~~, characterized in that the said strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ comprises a sleeve-shaped jacket containing a coiled spring ~~(7)~~ and an element ~~(8)~~ provided with the said pointed projections ~~(4)~~ and in that the element ~~(8)~~ is movable against the spring force of the coiled spring ~~(7)~~ from a first to a second position, the element ~~(8)~~ in its second position being situated within the space surrounded by the sleeve-shaped jacket.

14. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ according to ~~any one of the claims 11 up to and including 13~~ claim 11, characterized in that the said strengthening rod ~~(3)~~ is provided in a folding curtain according to any one of the claims 6 up to and including 10.